Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In this embodiment, the distance from the core end face to the micro-lens 205 can be set to about 1 mm, for example. Assuming that the expansion angle of the luminous flux outgoing from the core 201 on the core end face is NA = 0.1, the micro-lens 205 expands the luminous flux to a radius of about 100 μm. When the thickness of the near field optical head 104 is 400 μm and the refractive index of glass forming the near field optical head is 1.7, the NA of the luminous flux incident into the minute aperture 206 is at least 0.4. Consequently, the luminous flux is condensed to the minute aperture 206, the energy density becomes high and the intensity of near field light generated in the proximity of the minute aperture 206 becomes high.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-9 as follows:

1. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus utilizing near field light, comprising: a light source for generating light; a suspension arm; a flexure fixed to the suspension arm; a near field optical head fixed to the

flexure and having a minute aperture formed therein; a substantially rod-like optical waveguide having a core and a clad for conveying the light emitted by the light source through the core; a reflection surface spaced apart from a terminal end of the core of the optical waveguide opposite the light source for irradiating light projected from the terminal end of the core to the near field optical head; a recording medium disposed proximate the near field optical head; and a light reception portion for receiving scattered light caused by an interaction between the minute aperture and the recording medium; wherein the near field optical head has a lens formed on a surface thereof different from a surface on which the minute aperture is formed for focusing light received from the reflection surface onto the minute aperture; and wherein the terminal end of the core is located at an intermediate part of the optical waveguide so that the clad extends beyond the terminal end of the core.

2. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the reflection surface is a plane having an angle of about 45 degrees with respect to the terminal end of the core of the optical waveguide.

3. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the terminal end of the core is shaped to form a lens.

4. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the reflection surface is a plane formed to increase an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected from the terminal end of the core.

5. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 2; wherein the reflection surface is a plane formed to increase an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected from the terminal end of the core.

6. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 3; wherein the reflection surface is a plane formed to increase an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected from the terminal end of the core.

7. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the flexure supports the optical waveguide.

8. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the lens comprises a Fresnel lens.

9. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the optical waveguide is an optical fiber having a transparent layer formed thereon provided with the reflection surface.

Kindly add the following new claims 10-16:

10. A near-field optical head comprising: a support member; a minute structure formed on the support member for interacting with a recording medium via near-field light; an optical waveguide formed on the support member for guiding light between a light source and the minute structure and having a core, a clad and a reflective surface, the core having an end face facing the reflective surface and being spaced therefrom so that light traveling through the optical waveguide is projected from the end face of the core onto the reflective surface and is reflected by the reflective surface toward the minute structure; wherein information is recorded to and/or read from the recording medium based on the scattering of near-field light between the recording medium and the minute structure while the near-field optical head is positioned over the surface of the recording medium.

11. A near-field optical head according to claim 10; wherein the minute structure comprises a minute aperture formed in the support member.

12. A near-field optical head according to claim 11; wherein the minute aperture has a size equal to or smaller than a wavelength of light.

13. A near-field optical head according to claim 10; wherein the reflective surface is a plane having an angle of about 45 degrees with respect to the core of the optical waveguide.

14. A near-field optical head according to claim 10; wherein the reflective surface is a plane formed to increase an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected from the end face of the core.

15. A near-field optical head according to claim 10; wherein the clad of the optical waveguide extends beyond the end face of the core.

16. An information storage device having a recording head, a suspension arm for supporting the recording head relative to a recording medium, and a flexure linking the recording head to the suspension arm; wherein the recording head comprises the near-field optical head according to claim 10.

ADDITIONAL FEES:

No additional fees are believed required; however, should it be determined that a fee is due, authorization is hereby given to charge any such fee to our Deposit Account No. 01-0268.

the intensity of near field light generated in the proximity of the minute aperture 206 becomes high.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-9 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus utilizing near field light, comprising: a light source for generating light; a suspension arm; a flexure fixed to the [said] suspension arm; a near field optical head fixed to the flexure and having a minute aperture formed therein; a substantially rod-like optical waveguide having a core and a clad for conveying the light emitted by the light source through the core; a reflection surface formed spaced apart from a terminal [on the side of one of the] end [faces] of the core of the [said] optical waveguide opposite the light source [,] for irradiating light projected from the terminal end of the core to the [said] near field optical head; [a light reception portion; and] a recording medium disposed proximate the near field optical head; and a light reception portion for receiving scattered light caused by an interaction between the minute aperture and the recording medium; wherein the near field optical head has a lens [function for a head is] formed on a [the] surface thereof [of said near field optical head] different from a [the] surface on which [of] the [said] minute

aperture is formed for focusing light received from the reflection surface onto the minute aperture; and wherein the terminal end of the [, and a] core is located at [end face is formed at] an intermediate part of the [said] optical waveguide so that the clad extends beyond the terminal end of the core].

2. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; [,] wherein the [said] reflection surface is a plane having an angle of about 45 degrees with respect to the terminal end of the [said] core of the [said] optical waveguide.

3. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; wherein the terminal end of the [, which further includes a lens function on said] core is shaped to form a lens [end face].

4. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; [,] wherein the [said] reflection surface is a plane formed to increase [such that] an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected [outgoing] from the terminal end of the [said] core [end face becomes greater when reflected by said reflection surface].

5. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 2; [,] wherein the [said] reflection surface is a plane formed to increase [such that] an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected [outgoing] from the terminal end of the [said] core [end face becomes greater when reflected by said reflection surface].

6. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 3; [,] wherein the [said] reflection surface is a plane formed to increase [such that] an expansion angle of a luminous flux projected [outgoing] from the terminal end of the [said] core [end face becomes greater when reflected by said reflection surface].

7. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; [,] wherein the flexure supports the [said] optical waveguide [includes said flexure, too].

8. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; [,] wherein the lens comprises a Fresnel lens [accomplishes said lens function for a head].

9. (Amended) An information recording/reproduction apparatus according to claim 1; [,] wherein the [said] optical waveguide is an optical fiber having a transparent layer provided thereon having the [said] reflection surface.